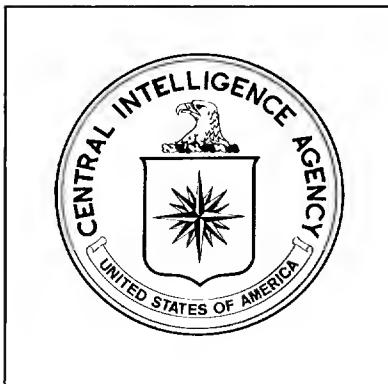


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STAFF NOTES:

Soviet Union Eastern Europe

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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

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Egyptian Reports of Tito's
Illness Seem Overdrawn

Although Cairo claims that President Sadat postponed his visit to Yugoslavia on May 18 because of Tito's poor health, the 82-year-old Yugoslav president seemed in good form last week.

Tito has been treated for "sciatica" over the past few weeks, but on Friday he stood through an hour-long military parade and was host at a reception following the parade; on Saturday, he met the US and Soviet delegations to the celebrations and on Sunday, he chaired a meeting of the collective state presidency that in a routine rotational move named Vladimir Bakaric of Croatia as vice president.

In the past few years, Tito has occasionally been forced to take long rests on doctors' orders. Although he conceivably may be planning another period of convalescence, Belgrade has not yet made any announcement to the diplomatic community as it usually does.

Cairo first began to report Tito's alleged health problems on Saturday--while Tito was busily engaged in state business. There is a good chance that claims of illness were a diplomatic way for Cairo to delay a visit that would have come at a bad time for both. Earlier this spring, Cairo announced that it would invite the Yugoslavs to participate in the Geneva talks, but it has recently cooled toward the idea of expanding the already complicated discussions. Belgrade is disappointed over this frustration of its efforts to play a wider role in any Middle East settlement.

Cairo now says that a new date for the Sadat visit may be set after the Egyptian leader talks with President Ford next month in Salzburg.

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Political Dissidence and Cultural
Nonconformity: Some Contrasts

Several recent events indicate that the regime's crackdown on political dissent may be intensifying and that it is being resisted mainly by the time-honored means of enlisting Western publicity. For the moment, no such direct struggle seems to be in the offing in the less political area of cultural nonconformity, where the regime's policy continues to display either drift or flexibility based on tactical considerations.

Some highly politicized dissidents see the current crackdown in the human rights field as a sign that the regime is confident it can deal severely with this central core of the dissident "movement" without doing too much damage to the Soviet image abroad. They believe internal security officials are convinced that even with the prominence of human rights issues at the European security talks, now reaching the end of their second stage at Geneva, the West is too preoccupied with its own external and internal political and economic problems to become involved. This view is one explanation for the regime's tough moves against many Jewish activists, religious/nationalist groups, and individual, stubborn dissidents of all stripes, and for the coordinated action late last month against the fledgling Soviet chapter of the international human rights organization, Amnesty International [redacted]

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Members of the "democratic movement" clustered around Andrey Sakharov have used their protest against the arrest or harassment of their Amnesty International colleagues to sound the alarm abroad. Sakharov's appeal to world opinion on behalf of all persecuted Soviet dissidents was reportedly later signed by some 60 major and minor lights in the

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"movement." This display of solidarity and defiance suggests that while the dissidents believe their situation is serious and may be deteriorating, they have not given up hope that effective Western publicity can help stem the tide.

The appearance earlier this month of another issue of the underground *Chronicle of Current Events*, the samizdat voice of the "democratic movement," may also be an attempt to show both the regime and the West that the movement is and intends to stay alive. Sakharov's circle and other dissidents may, in addition, see the reportedly marked improvement in the regime's treatment of long-imprisoned Ukrainian dissident Valentyn Moroz as evidence that persistent and vocal international publicity can pay off. Closer to home, Sakharov and his wife reportedly recently conducted a three-day hunger strike to protest the regime's refusal to let Mrs. Sakharov go to Italy for treatment of a condition threatening her sight.

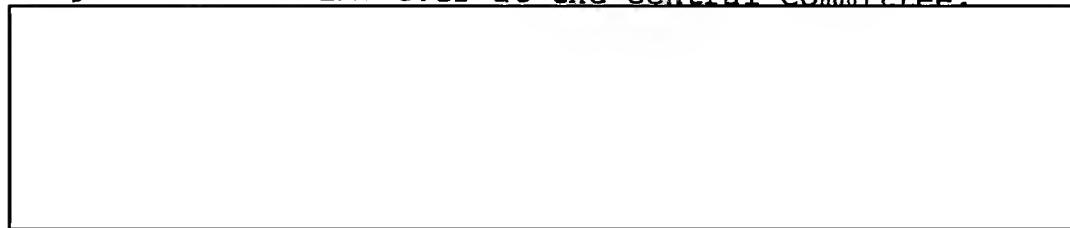
In cultural policy, by contrast, the signals remain mixed but are tolerant of some forms of nonconformism. Moscow and Leningrad unofficial artists are currently running another series of shows and discussions in their apartments and studios without harassment from the police. The artists are also negotiating with the authorities for an outdoor show in Leningrad on May 25 and for another open air exhibit in Moscow later this summer.

The lack of clear party guidance in the cultural field--resulting largely from the vacancy in the Secretariat's cultural/propaganda slot since Petr Demichev moved to the culture ministry last fall--has evidently confused a bureaucracy unaccustomed to making decisions; this may account for some of the successes seemingly enjoyed by the non-conformists. Many Soviet intellectuals apparently

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believe that this unsettled state of affairs will persist while political maneuvering intensifies prior to next year's CPSU congress. Candidate Politburo member Demichev remains very much on the leadership circuit, and seems to be devoting considerable time to party business despite the loss of his Secretarist post. One culture ministry official recently complained privately that Demichev appeared to be spending "half his time over at the Central Committee."

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Warsaw Pact Anniversary

The twentieth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact on Wednesday has been heralded in the Soviet and East European press as a significant milestone, but it is unlikely that it will be marked by the announcement of major changes in the organization or mission of the pact. Of formal significance is the fact that the treaty of Warsaw establishing the pact is ending its original 20 year term of validity this week and will be automatically extended another ten years.

Moscow initially intended the pact to be more a facade than a real military alliance. The East European states were already tied to the Soviet military machine through an interlocking network of bilateral mutual aid treaties, and from the outset the pact's value was as a bargaining chip to be traded against NATO's dissolution. After that, in Moscow's view, an all-European security system dominated by the USSR could be created.

Over the years, however, Moscow has increasingly used the pact as a channel to transmit directives to its East European allies and organize East European support for Soviet policies. Furthermore, the pact serves as an instrument by which the Soviets, with varying degrees of success, rationalize and coordinate East European military resources, training, and defense policy in the USSR's interest. Although a unified command exists on paper, it is not likely that in wartime the pact would have a command function separate from the Soviet armed forces. There is no pact military doctrine distinguishable from that of the Soviet Union, nor is there reliable evidence that the pact allies have earmarked any portion of their line combat units to other than a Warsaw Pact mission. Instead, the command structure suggests that as the

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situation warrants, the Soviet high command will include in its field forces such East European forces as it thinks appropriate.

Though ostensibly directed defensively against the West, the pact has helped maintain Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. Resentment of the lop-sided nature of the Soviet - East European relationship, of which the pact is only one expression, has manifested itself frequently during the life of the organization. Only Albania, however, has formally denounced the treaty, withdrawing from the pact in 1968 after six years of non-participation in its affairs. In countries such as Poland and Hungary, where Soviet contingents are stationed under bilateral agreements and the Warsaw treaty, Moscow used its forces in 1956 to influence and to repress, respectively, developments which threatened internal bloc security. In Czechoslovakia, which had no Soviet troops on its soil, Moscow used the pact as a vehicle for numerous conferences and military exercises preparatory to the five-nation, Soviet-led invasion in 1968. Subsequent to the invasion Moscow used pact defense needs to justify the permanent stationing of Soviet troops within easy reach of major Czech cities.

Only Romania has been able to strike a more independent pose while maintaining its membership within the alliance. Through a complex set of maneuvers in which Bucharest exploited the budding Sino-Soviet dispute and Soviet desires for greater integration within CEMA, Romania alone among the pact members managed to get the total withdrawal of Soviet forces from its territory. The Romanians have built on this accomplishment, in the process being the first East European pact member to recognize West Germany, the only one to maintain relations with Israel after the 1967 war, the only one to condemn the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the only one which has virtually

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banned large scale pact maneuvers on its territory. So far the Soviets have chosen to limit their response to Bucharest's policies, probably because the Romanian communists have maintained rigid control of the domestic scene and have backed away from some of their more provocative proposals when their position has appeared isolated.

Most recently, Romania has stalled Soviet plans to create a permanent committee of pact foreign ministers and a pact secretariat headed by a strong Soviet secretary general. These proposals have cropped up periodically over the last two decades and are consistent with Brezhnev's often stated desire to make the pact "the main center for coordinating the fraternal countries' foreign policy." Bucharest may eventually have to compromise, but it has thwarted whatever intention the Soviets may have had to announce the proposal at the pact anniversary celebrations.

There have been perennial rumors that Moscow wants to widen the pact's area of operations to Asia, either by bringing Mongolia into the organization or by amending the pact's charter to allow the transfer of East European units to the Sino-Soviet border. Such moves are not likely, as Moscow wishes neither to complicate further the anti-Chinese campaign it is promoting through a series of international communist conferences nor to employ East European troops, whose military and political reliability it has never really trusted. Instead, Moscow will probably settle for vocal East European support on the Sino-Soviet dispute in the anniversary communique.

Other rumors have circulated that Moscow will re-state more forcefully its readiness to dissolve the Warsaw Pact if NATO is dismantled and a new European security structure created by the CSCE, or else announce a reduction in Soviet forces in Eastern Europe

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to help the Vienna force reduction talks along. Such rumors conflict with reports of waning Soviet interest in measures to institutionalize a European security system and persistent Soviet attempts to increase the breadth and effectiveness of the Warsaw Pact. Furthermore, the Soviets have tied any force reductions to comparable Western reductions and have shown no sign of unilaterally reducing their military presence in recent months. It is more likely that Moscow will wait to see how the European balance settles after the security conference and what the preferences are of the leadership that emerges from next year's Soviet party congress before embarking on new security policy initiatives.

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